

HOW TO REPORT ABUSE: MARYLAND

DISCLOSURE TIPS



WHAT DO YOU SAY?

- An adult's reaction to disclosure plays an important role in the beginning of the healing process for the child.
- "I'm really glad that you told me."
- "It took a lot of courage to tell me."
- "It's not your fault."
- "We will work together to get you help."
- "I will need to tell some other people who help to protect children."



WHAT ARE THE CHILD'S NEEDS?

- Be careful not to make promises that you cannot keep. Do not promise you will not tell anyone.
- Report immediately.
- Only speak to those who have to know – confidentially.
- Gentle honesty – keep information age-appropriate and general.

INFORMATION NEEDED



HAVE THIS INFORMATION AVAILABLE:

- The name and home address of the child and the parent or other individual responsible for the care of the child;
- The present location of the child;
- The age of the child (or approximate age);
- Names and ages of other children in the home;
- The nature and extent of injuries or sexual abuse or neglect of the child
- Any information relayed by the individual making the report of previous possible physical or sexual abuse or neglect.
- Information available to the individual reporting that might aid in establishing the cause of the injury or neglect;
- The identity of the individual or individuals responsible for abuse or neglect



HOW TO REPORT

Mandated reporters are expected to make oral reports immediately following a suspicion of abuse. To make an oral report you may contact law enforcement or your local department of social services. Visit <http://dhr.maryland.gov/child-protective-services/reporting-suspected-child-abuse-or-neglect/local-offices/> to locate and access your county's social services department contact information. Maryland law requires you to inform your head of school that you have made an abuse report with your local social services department.

A written report (Reporting form DHR/SSA 180) must also be made within 48 hours of contact which discloses the suspected abuse or neglect, submitted to your local department of social services and your State Attorney's office. Form DHR/SSA 108 can be accessed here: <http://dhr.maryland.gov/documents/Child%20Protective%20Services/180%20Form%20with%20instructions-fillable.pdf>